THE

HARVARD LYCEUM.

No. 5.] *Cambridge, September* 8, 1810. [Vol. I.

POETRY.

The following poem was pronounced last February, before the Hasty-Pudding-Club, a literary society in this university, at one of their quarterly meetings. The favourable reception it then met with, has induced the authour to allow its insertion in the pages of the Lyceum.

MAGNANIMITY.

THROUGH the fair medium of th' historick page,
Survey the active world in every age :
With careful eye each virtuous impulse scan,
That warms the savage, or adorns the man :
To reason's clue your steady course resign'd,
Explore the trackless labyrinth of mind :
Mark from each source what various graces flow,
What charms that soften, or what fires that glow.
Then name that noble feeling of the soul,
That free as air, disdaining all controul,
Is yet as gentle as the breeze that roves
Through Asia's shady walks and spicy groves.
'Tis magnanimity, that, soaring high
Above this narrow earth, this bounded sky,
Scorns the close confines of this mortal clod,
And turns from earth to contemplate its God.
Possess'd of this, man feels his native power,
Nor trembles in misfortune's darkest hour :
Though round him lower the shades of tenfold night,
No fears dismay him, and no dangers fright :
Firm and unmov'd he lifts his dauntless eye,
And smiles amidst the terrours of the sky.

By the strong hand of independence stay'd,
He looks not from himself to others' aid;
Nor courts the fickle smile that Fortune wears,
To sooth his sorrows, or relieve his cares:
But, like Orion or the northern star,
Seen by the anxious mariner afar,
Still as recedes the closing light of day,
Sheds from the azure heavens a brighter ray.
Yet should kind heaven with liberal hand bestow
The power to brighten Penury's care-worn brow;
Should health and peace the present hour adorn,
And pleasure's rose o'ertop life's rugged thorn;
With vigorous arm he stems the dangerous tide,
Meekness his stay, humanity his guide:
He cannot view the pallid face of grief,
And check the hand outstretch'd to give relief;
To dizzy heights his virtuous soul uplift,
Or lose the giver, when he views the gift.
Free'd from the interested pleas that bind
In selfish chains the miser's sordid mind,
His hand, his heart, he opes to all mankind.
Unus'd to change, he holds his steady way,
Mildly sedate, yet temperately gay:
Not urged to passion by the taunting words
That spleen suggests, or burning rage affords;
Nor slow to rouse at honour's sacred name,
To clear his faith, or vindicate his fame.
His very form shows virtue's fix'd control;
The fearless eye proclaims the fearless soul:
To him the awe-commanding mien is given;
His feet press earth, his head is lost in heaven.
What inborn grace lifts mortal man so near
"To the first good, first perfect, and first fair?"
Mark the reverse: from these proud heights descend,
Where mingling virtues various graces blend;
To drop one pitying tear at honour's fane,
For glory wreck'd, for weakness' abject reign.
Shrunk by her palsied touch, man fetter'd lies,
And still sinks earthward when he'd touch the skies.
The softer virtues may adorn his mind,
But independence lingers far behind.

Yielding to every stroke of terrour's power,
He fears the present, dreads the future hour ;
And conning fate's dim page with caution vain,
Kills present joys with dread of future pain.
If fortune frown, and scenes of past delight
Serve but to blacken mis'ry's gloomy night ;
As when on wings of fire, with lightning haste,
The scorching Semoom blazes o'er the waste ;
On the parch'd earth the trembling Arab lies,
Nor dares to raise to heaven his firm-closed eyes ;
So, when fate's adverse tempest howls around,
Despair and terrour drag him to the ground.
If prosperous scenes await, and pleasure's gales,
Waft his glad bark, and swell the yielding sails ;
Oft avarice chains him with her icy bands,
And pride rejects what gratitude demands.
His roving soul no settled posture finds ;
Wild as old ocean, restless as the winds ;
As the mad wave, by every cloud o'ercast,
Chafes with each tempest, roars with every blast ;
Yet when the winds are silenc'd, half afraid
Surveys, and wonders at the wrecks it made ;
So he, as headlong passion leads, flies on,
And following every guide, is true to none.

Lo, yon stern form who rears his shameless head,
By vice supported, and by folly fed !
Seen from afar, his features seem to bear
Virtue's own stamp, her very form to wear ;
But nearer view'd, the transient virtues fly ;
Revenge and malice fire his dark'ning eye.
The gorgeous robe, which o'er his limbs he threw,
To blind the sight, and veil his crimes from view ;
Now, as from contrast greater praise to win,
Shows the ill-hidden loathsomeness within.
His curling lip breathes high and fierce disdain ;
His swelling heart owns pride's tumultuous reign :
Yet this mask'd fiend stalks fearless on our shore,
And trembling Justice lifts the sword no more.
With his curs'd fire he warms the yielding breast,
By all acknowledg'd and by all caress'd ;

And dares with impious hand the ties to rend,
That bind the father, brother, sister, friend.
Need I say more to stamp our country's shame?
Need I, false-honour, tell thy hated name?
In honour's guise, the treacherous dæmon calls,
And at her altar's foot her victim falls:
Falls, perhaps young, in life's full pride and prime;
Falls unprepar'd, and dies before his time:
Falls, Justice, falls, a victim at that shrine,
Which custom raises on the wreck of thine!
Falls, like some hireling bravo; fell despair
Howls o'er his grave, and broods forever there.
But he, whom magnanimity may guide,
Dares tyrant-custom's savage laws deride:
He cannot think that fighting for a name,
The field of duel is the field of fame;
Nor fear, when knaves and fools with scorn revile,
The pointed finger, or the taunting smile.
His is the good-man's praise, his heart's applause;
He needs no other tongues to plead his cause.
Free'd from all selfish thoughts, he dares to own
His life belongs not to himself alone.
He owes it to the soil his fathers trod;
He owes it to his kindred and his God:
He dares not by one rash and impious deed,
Pierce those dear breasts for which his own would bleed.

By magnanimity, whole empires rise,
And nations spread their glory to the skies.
Ask those vast ruins, which, uprais'd in air,
But show, imperial Rome once triumph'd there!
Ask her spoil'd statues, and her age-worn halls,
Her broken columns and her mouldering walls;
Ask ruin'd Rome, what friendly power upheld,
And bore her victor from the battle-field;
When heroes fought but for a deathless name;
No wealth but honour, no reward but fame!
'Twas not mere valour, or consummate skill,
That bow'd fair Freedom to their sov'reign will.
Stood magnanimity their faithful guide,
Their foes derided, and their power defied.

By her, undaunted every toil they view'd,
Though harrass'd, firm, though vanquish'd, unsubdued;
By her their standards to the wind unfurl'd,
And rear'd their empire on a prostrate world.
Ask, why grim desolation frowns around?
Why her proud temples press the burthen'd ground?
The same sad answer gives inquiry rest:
Fierce Alaric own'd what Romans once possessed:
In abject pride, base weakness held her reign;
Th' attendant vices followed in her train;
Then first did treach'ry her mean arts begin,
And murder bought what valour could not win.

The authour of the ensuing effusion celebrates an event, and describes certain scenes, "*quorum magna pars fuit.*" As he is entirely unknown to us, we, as editors of the Lyceum, thank him for his communication, and fervently pray, that he is not one of the unhappy number whom he commiserates at the close of his poem. If we are not mistaken, he possesses a genius, which will not dishonour the poetick reputation of the college. He must indulge us in the liberties we have taken with his piece. We are prepared to defend the alterations and substitutions made in it by any mode of *private* communication or intercourse.

EXAMINATION.

The morning sun on Harvard shone;
Loud sounds at six the clock's dull tone,
And many waiting younkers own,
Bosoms that throb most fearfully.

Now muster'd on the chapel stairs,
For the dread work each one prepares,
And face by far more woeful wears
Than Quixote looking ruefully.

Called by divisions they obey,
And go, where leads the winding way,
A teacher, that looks stern as they
Put on a face of agony.

Hard beat their hearts the livelong day;
They cannot banish fear away,
And faintly hope scarce darts a ray
To dissipate their misery.

Haunted by day with fearful screw,*
Th' approach of night rejoiced they view ;
But evening hours no prospect shew
Of end to their anxiety.

Next morning as the bell tolls eight,
Again on Harvard's steps they wait,
And while yet ignorant of their fate,
The hours move on, how lazily.

But at the long-expected call,
With quick and anxious joy they all
Hie to the learned judges' hall,
To hear th' awaited destiny.

Then quaking stand they all around ;
Fix'd are their eyes upon the ground,
And (save the tutor's—hem !) no sound
Disturbs the silent company.

How beats each burning bosom high,
As whispers *hope*, you're not turn'd by,
And how again it heaves a sigh,
As *fear* but hints the contrary.

The answers given them, or make
Their throbbing hearts the fiercer ache,
Or thence the heavy burden take
Which hung upon uncertainty.

Joy bursts from those, who not in vain
Have studied 'gainst this day of pain ;
But others scarce their tears refrain,
Who come prepared but carelessly.

Ah, hapless brothers, may success
A long vacation's study bless,
That you returning may possess
A seat in th' university.

* We are sorry to find our young correspondent is so early initiated into the *technology* of college.

THE BOSTON ATHENÆUM.

THOUGH the literature of America at the present day possess not that exalted rank, to which many of its enthusiastick patrons would wish to see it elevated, yet there is very little cause for discouragement, either in its condition, or its prospects. To mourn its remoteness from maturity, would be almost to repine at the course of nature. Premature genius is often the prognostick of future degeneracy, and a too early luxuriance contains within itself the principles of decay. It is not therefore the duty of the present generation to indulge melancholy apprehensions for the literary fate of their country; the true patriot most reasonably anticipates a constant accumulation to the present stock of learning, and believes that the American name will eventually attain a glory, whose magnitude and permanence may rival the splendid and venerable institutions of the transatlantick world. Nor does a circumstance exist, which tends to damp the ardour of these prophetick visions, or render them ridiculous or groundless. On the contrary, a momentary comparison of the condition of our country, with its condition twenty years ago, will present to the most desponding mind the brightest encouragements. Such a comparison it is not our design in this place to institute. It was, however, unavoidably suggested by the present subject of discussion.

Among the various institutions, which the spirit of literature has of late induced our citizens to establish, there is unquestionably none of greater importance, or of more extensive influence, than the Boston Athenæum. The infant colleges in our frontiers are not to be excepted from this general remark, as a very little consideration of the subject will evince. The interests of commerce more than those of agriculture require the co-operation and influence of litera-

ture. The citizens of a crowded metropolis, where corruption and degeneracy are liable to flow through every avenue, and overwhelm all that is just and good, ought surely to be more enlightened than the dispersed inhabitants of the fields. The unfrequency of communication among these renders them less exposed to a defection from rural purity and simplicity, while the little intercourse they enjoy will more generally be devoted to the purposes of improvement and mutual civilization.

To the philanthropick mind, the establishment of the Athenæum in the midst of a populous and busy city, presents a prospect encouraging and delightful. The interests of literature are thus at once interwoven with those of commerce, and these two grand pillars of the happiness and prosperity of the commonwealth are enabled mutually to support each other. The merchants of Boston have been most liberal contributors to this institution. A large proportion of them are connected with it, and enjoy its advantages. They are therefore possessed of a retreat from the fatiguing cares and perplexities of their profession, and an honourable and elegant resort during their days and hours of leisure. Improvement is thus insensibly disseminated throughout the whole mass of citizens, and a taste for literature and science is propagated, cherished, and matured.

The magnitude and strength which a fortunate commencement, and a liberal patronage have acquired for this institution, relieves us from any apprehension of its future extinction or decay; and the principles on which it is founded secure a constant increase and acquisition to its fund. So in our anticipations there is no limit of excellence or magnificence to which it may not arrive. It is impossible therefore for a benevolent mind not to look forward with rapture to the extensive prospects of utility and happiness exhibited by this admirable establishment. When it shall become so

extended, as to answer all the purposes of its original constitution and design ; when it shall become not only the resort of idle apathy, of inquisitive curiosity, or of literary *ennui*, but the school of science and of art, the nursery of philosophers, and the favourite retreat of learned men; and shall still, as at present, be accessible to every class of citizens, who are disposed to contribute to its support, and partake of its advantages ; what bounds can we imagine to its utility and influence ? Nor let it be objected, that the improvement of the common citizens must necessarily be small, on account of the little portion of time they can devote to these pursuits, and the impracticability of turning to the advantage of an individual so vast a collection of books. A daily intercourse, though the time be short in which it is indulged, will at length render a man familiar with many valuable facts, and put him in the possession of attainments, which will refine and enlighten his mind, and become a source of solace and delight in the arduous and toilsome occupations of life. You would not lounge an hour every day in the shop of an apothecary, without obtaining, before a great while, a very tolerable acquaintance of the contents of his drawers, and some knowledge of the science of his profession. And you do not pay a very flattering compliment to the intellect of the merchant, while you deny that he will derive any acquisitions of valuable knowledge, from a daily visitation of the Athenæum, and superficial and hasty glances at its books ; and at the same time profess yourself capable of entering his store, and shortly acquiring a thorough knowledge of his trunks, bales, and boxes. Not that we would advocate the scheme of turning the merchant into a profound scholar and philosopher, and indulge him in books of science and literature, at the expense of his ledger and his diary. This would be equally as ridiculous as training up the student in all the mysteries of the art of traffick. But we

would wish a man to be so far familiar in literary pursuits, as duly to teach him the practical philosophy of life, and maintain his rank in society with reputation and honour.

Such are the advantages which the Boston Athenæum affords to a class of citizens, whose professional habits are naturally beyond the sphere of its influence, but who by the judicious constitution of the establishment, are enabled to partake of its invaluable benefits. Its institutors, like those bountiful and publick-spirited men, who conduct canals from some large river to enrich and fertilize the sterile land, but without essentially impairing the original stream, have diffused through the soil of commerce, naturally uncongenial to its influence, the blessings and the richness of literature.

The benefits derived from the Athenæum by men, whose pursuits are literary, are almost too obvious to be enumerated. We might with equal propriety expatiate on the utility of an Exchange to merchants, as describe the advantages of such an institution to the commonwealth of letters. A summary notice of them, however, may perhaps be requisite in this essay.

There are few American scholars, whose pecuniary circumstances admit the possession of a library of sufficient extent, to enable them to pursue their studies with any considerable degree of satisfaction and success. It is not even the careful and diligent perusal of a number of books, however judiciously selected, which will complete the accomplished man of letters, and the useful scholar. He must extend his researches far more widely, though less systematically. True learning consists in a thorough knowledge of individual objects of speculation, not in a familiar acquaintance with the theories and systems of particular authours. The philosophical reader will pursue his inquiries rather to form systems of his own, than slavishly to adopt those of other men. Hence

he must expatiate in a wider field than his own little patrimony will generally permit him to purchase. He must not be constantly labouring with his axe, to hew down the sturdy oak, and trees of solid structure; but he must now and then amuse himself in the search of humbler plants; he must often stoop to cull the fragrant flower, and salutary herb; and not disdain to range through the fields, to collect parterres among various productions, exotick and domestick. "Some books," says Lord Bacon, whose authority on such a subject is of all others entitled to veneration, "are to be "tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chew-"ed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only "in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some "few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. "Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts "made of them by others," &c. It is evident the great philosopher never penned this sentence for persons, whose course of reading is confined to the narrow limits of a hundred books. He certainly had in his view collections more grand and extensive, and addressed his directions to those who live within the sphere of institutions of the nature of the Boston Athenæum.

One of the greatest discouragements to the study of the classicks is undoubtedly the philological difficulties which so frequently occur, and baffle the most penetrating acuteness of unassisted sagacity. The insoluble knots, in which the corruption or ignorance of editors has bound many passages in the ancient authours, have frequently deterred an ardent spirit, and provoked him to relinquish his ineffectual labour. From this despair he can only be relieved by resorting to the best commentators, and consulting the various readings which ingenuity, industry, and care, have furnished and preserved to the world. In the best works of this kind the Athenæum abounds. The most valuable translations too of all the

Greek and Latin authours are to be found in its alcoves. With what pleasure therefore will those who reside in its vicinity in future be able to pursue their classical studies, and by periodical visits to this library in a few minutes extricate themselves from every perplexity, in which Schrevelius and their own unassisted skill were impotent.

The transactions of all the foreign academies and societies, complete series of every European magazine of any importance, systematick books in every science and art, comprise an immense fund of matter, to which men of every profession may recur with success for information on any subject. An early supply of every periodical publication in England forms not the least important part of the plan of this institution. Here the curious and inquisitive rambler may at once be transported into all the bustle and din of London; can become acquainted with their customs, manners, fashions, taste, and literature, and revel amidst the delights of foreign travel and experience, while he is reclining at home in the chair of tranquil indolence. But indolence is not the disposition which the Athenæum is calculated to cherish; it is rather a mellifluous Hybla, where we have witnessed even drones become industrious, and display no small diligence in the search of intellectual sweets.

We most heartily wish that the original design of this institution may be put in execution, as soon as the resources of the establishers shall admit. The constitution they have formed, has indeed, like the guardian goddess from whom it derives its name, sprung into existence in the full maturity of excellence and wisdom. And though not like her, completely armed, yet we hope the liberality of citizens will soon furnish it with a perfect panoply.

VOLTAIRE TRADUCED BY HIS OWN PANEGYRIST.

THE biography of Voltaire by Condorcet is generally esteemed a production of considerable merit, and by no means deficient in interest, nor any of the qualities, requisite to constitute a good work of this kind. If any fault can be alleged against it, it consists in too frequently asserting the private opinions of the authour without assigning any reasons; and perhaps to this another may be added, the undue partiality he entertains for the subject of his work.

Voltaire was born in 1694, and died in 1778. What a very long life! How did he employ it! In such a manner as Condorcet thinks becomes the philosopher and the man. But let us see what sort of an account we can make of this celebrated wonder of the world, even from the life which his admirer and friend here gives us of him. I believe we shall be able to distinguish, among all the extravagant eulogiums with which his biographer has seen fit to overwhelm his memory, some traits that will stamp on his character the marks of infidelity and folly, rather than of true philosophy, and manly dignity.

Almost the first incident which transpires in his youth, is a violent quarrel with his father for disobeying his instructions. This was a happy omen, I suppose, of his future freedom from prejudice, and his amazing love of the "social order." This virtuous young man was sent out of his father's family, in consequence of his disobedience, and placed under the care of the marquis de Chateauneuf, the French embassadour at Holland. And how did our young philosopher conduct in his place of exile? With that humility and sobriety which becomes a banished child? Before he had lived long with his protector, he was engaged in a disgraceful amour, and the marquis was obliged to send

him back to his family for having disobeyed his orders. But still I suppose the young philosopher thought that obedience to the injunctions of a father, and the established rules of a family, were nothing but slavish and degrading prejudice; for we find him soon dismissed again from his paternal home, where he had incurred such displeasure, that no subsequent submission could restore him to favour. We then find him writing licentious and irreligious plays, forming connexions with public actresses, and going through the whole round of sacrilege and dissipation, necessary to render him a complete anti-christian philosopher. His manners and habits had so much politeness and civility, that on his first interview with the celebrated Rosseau, he excited a quarrel, which continued ever afterwards fierce and implacable. A little after we see him in the Bastile, and at the end of six months ordered to quit Paris for insolence to some *prejudiced* nobleman of the age. Some time after he had regained his liberty, this liberal and virtuous philosopher published a most offensive and licentious work under the title of Urania; of this he was himself ashamed, and was obliged to conceal the name of the authour. He was so cowardly as to attribute it to the Abbe Chaulieu, who had been dead several years. This instance of literary fraud and falsehood is utterly inexcusable, nor can the attempts of Voltaire's panegyrist himself remove from the mind of the reader the aversion which this act necessarily excites. But our limits will not permit us to record one half of the testimony which Voltaire's eulogist has given against him. They will permit us only to transcribe a single passage, which will give the reader some idea of the vanity, impudence, and blasphemy of this arch-apostle of modern infidelity. "I "am wearied, said he one day, of hearing it repeated, "that twelve men were sufficient to establish christianity, "and I wish to prove that there needs but one to destroy

" it !" God be praised, that our holy religion is established on a foundation too durable to be overturned by the imbecile attacks of a writer of plays.

CHARACTER OF FLAVIUS.

FLAVIUS is a country physician, who never enjoyed the advantages of a publick education, but acquired the rudiments of pharmacy, surgery, and physick from an obscure and ignorant quack. With a mind naturally inquisitive, and bent on curious pursuits, Flavius determined not to neglect even the small opportunity he possessed to arrive at some considerable knowledge of his profession. His anatomy, to be sure, was confined to the dissection of a rat or cat; and as to his chemical experiments, despising the absurdity of seeking for the philosopher's stone, he was contented with melting an ounce of lead to pour into the water, or of burning brimstone to judge of the smell thereof. A large patch gown which our philosopher constantly wore, and a solemn, scholastick disposition of features in which he ever appeared, together with a reserved, unsocial, and singular set of habits, conspired to render him an object of veneration among all who knew him. The fame of Flavius' scientifick attainments was soon diffused the country round, and old men and young men, grandmothers and maids, eagerly looked forward to the time when our hero should set up to " practise " doctoring." The brides were elated with joy in anticipating the future care and attention they should receive from so eminent a physician; the old women were sure that every chronical torment would be expelled from their constitutions, and a complete re-adolescence be effected by the magick skill of the newly established doctor; the men of age impatiently waited his attendance for the expulsion of every dis-

ease which accident or imprudence had accumulated; and antiquated maidens thought that the very appearance of so skilful a youth would strengthen the debilities of their nervous systems.

The student at length completed his discipline. He came forward in the world with all the advantages of a wide-extended reputation, and a most flattering recommendation from his beloved master. He was received with every token of satisfaction in the village where he established himself. The inhabitants of all ages were ambitious to attract his attention, and it is said that the ladies have even counterfeited sickness that they might send for the doctor. To this fortunate reception, succeeded a series of more fortunate practice. Out of ten who were attacked by the measles, six of them recovered under his skilful guidance and constant care; and only four died by the ravages of that terrible disease. By the application of a large iron instrument of his to the back of a person bleeding at the nose, the current was effectually stopped in fifteen minutes, and the patient was not again troubled for the space of two days. He prescribed a dose of tartar-emetic to a young man, who had crushed the end of his little finger; and so efficacious was the medicine, that in less than two months there was hardly any pain to be felt by the patient, and no remains of the wound to be perceived, except a large black scab. A neighbour of his once broke his leg, and the advice of our hero was, *to let nature work*. By such astonishing manifestations of learning and skill did this wonderful doctor arrive at the highest point of eminence. His prescriptions and his applications far outdo the most efficacious operations that were ever known to take place under Perkins' metallic points. He likewise had the prudence to charge with a great deal of moderation, and would of course have secured the practice from a large proportion of the people, even if

men of greater eminence had been his rivals. But as it is, money flowed in apace, and numerous little sums have contributed to extend his opulence. He is now rather declining in years, in the possession of a valuable property, and a family of ten children. Some of the boys are to have a liberal education, and most of the girls will be sent to the boarding-schools. His son Charles, after he will have heard a course of lectures at the University, may be entitled to the credit of ten times more learning than ever was contained within the pericranium of his father. But Charles will probably never arrive at any great reputation for skill, and will therefore with Flavius conduce to exhibit the aim of these remarks, that *science is not always requisite to obtain eminence among the ignorant and the vulgar.*

LIMON.

".....Pratensibus optima.....
" Natura est." HOR.

COMPOSITION OF SERMONS.

I DO not recollect any where to have seen a distinction made as to the methods of writing pulpit-discourses, but I apprehend the one I am to make will be found to be real. Whoever has read many of the sermons of the old English divines, and of those of our own country, will have perceived that those of the same authour are generally of an equal length. I therefore suppose that an equal quantity of paper was devoted by the writer to each sermon. Then come his divisions and subdivisions, which are almost always arbitrary, and scarcely ever seem to be exactly founded in the nature of the subject. When these are instituted, all the care of the authour seems to be, to say something as appropriate

to the division under consideration, as his ingenuity can possibly invent. He ransacks the bible for texts, he hunts through all the heathen writers for passages, he robs his repository of tropes and figures, and borrows from all the commentators and authours he has ever read, to illustrate his topick, and enforce it on the minds of his hearers. He begins by discussing the whole chapter from which the text was extracted, and informs the audience under what circumstances it was introduced. He ends by reflections and inferences, some of which pretty naturally arise from the subject, but most of them might be subjoined to almost any other discourse. Now to compose a good discourse on these principles, a man must be a very extensive reader, and possess an excellent memory; but it does not require much *originality of thought.* Hence I would establish this general distinction in sermons; that there is one class, like those I have been describing, which are composed by the assistance of great reading, and a comprehensive memory; and another which require only originality of thought, accurate observation, and a metaphysical turn of mind. It need not perhaps be observed, that the latter class are at the present day the most popular, and the custom of extensive divisions and subdivisions, if not ridiculous, is at least singular and tedious.

TOGA VIRILIS.

IT is very well known, that many ancient rites and usages had a significant application. There is one, whose application probably never entered the heads of those who established it, but is nevertheless true and obvious. The usual time of the year in which the Roman youths assumed the *toga virilis*, or man's apparel, was when they first attended the *feasts of Bacchus.* Do the youth of modern days never at-

tend the feasts of Bacchus before they have assumed the Toga Virilis ?

ETYMOLOGY OF UXOR.

WE are almost afraid that this article will discourage (if indeed it ever existed) the study of etymology among the ladies; for we shall be mistaken if the pride of some of them be not wounded by the derivation of the Latin word *uxor* [wife]. The bride bound the door posts of her husband's house with woollen fillets, and *anointed* [ungebat] them with the fat of swine or wolves, and from this servile office arose her name, *uxor*. The object of this duty was to avert fascinations or enchantments. Would the brides of the present day be willing so soon to put their husbands out of the reach of fascinations and enchantments? Do they not sometimes, however, effect it without resorting to the mysterious expedient of the Roman fair ones ?

WHIMSICAL EPITAPH.

IN the Gothick church at Dobberan, a village of Mecklenburg in Germany, is to be seen the following epitaph on a man of the name of POTT :

Here lies Ahleke Pott :
Have pity on me, O Lord God,
As I would have pity on thee,
Wert thou Ahleke Pott,
And I Lord God.

RELICKS.

IN the same church is a very large collection of relicks, which Mr. Nugent, in his letters from Germany, enume-

rates, as a specimen of the ignorance and superstition of former ages. We can gratify our readers with but a few of the most prominent and remarkable.

A bundle of hay, which the three wise men of the east had for their cattle, and left behind them at Bethlehem.

A piece of linen which the virgin Mary wove with her own hands.

A piece of the head belonging to the fish mentioned in Tobiah.

A piece of Joseph's mantle, which he left in the hands of Potiphar's wife, when she tempted him to lie with her.

Part of Judas's bowels which gushed out as he burst asunder.

The scissors with which Dalilah cut off Sampson's hair.

A piece of apron which the butcher wore when he killed the calf upon the return of the prodigal son.

A fragment of Christ's winding sheet.

One of the five smooth stones which David put into his bag, when he went to encounter the giant Goliath.

A branch of the tree on which Absalom hung by the hair.

A piece of St. Paul's fishing net.

MARBLEHEAD.

AT the interment of President Holyoke, who departed this life in 1769, Mr. Sewall, then Hancock Professor of the Oriental Languages, was appointed to deliver a funeral oration in Latin. He executed his task with much ability and classical purity and elegance. But in his biography of the deceased, being obliged to mention Marblehead, the town in which he had resided for a number of years, and served in the ministry, the ingenuity of the orator was put to the

test in Latinizing so uncouth a name. How well he succeeded may be seen in the passage where the word occurred. "Sedem in ecclesiâ *Marmaracriensi* felicissimè sortitus est," &c. To this he subjoined a singular note, which we shall take the liberty here of inserting, and translating.

"MARMARACRIA, oppidum maritimum, saxis abun-
"dans: indè Novanglicè dictum MARBLEHEAD,—asperrima
"vox, aures Latinas horridè perstringens." "MARMARA-
"CRIA, a maratime town, abounding in rocks; from which
"circumstance it is called, in the true purity of the New-
"England idiom, MARBLEHEAD; a most grating word,
"and intolerably offensive to classical ears."

HASTY WRITERS.

WE have scarce seen any thing so simple, and yet so pointed as the following. It was written by a favourite authour of the last century: "Little writers compose books
"apace; for naturalists observe that the less the insect is,
"the oftener it lays, and the faster it propagates; *but then*
"*their brood is very short-lived.*"

POLITIAN.

THE violent contests among the learned at the revival of letters frequently led them to express opinions of each other, which we can hardly read without smiling at their absurdity. Indeed, we observe a great deal of *nationality* in their disputes, and are surprised at the very different judgment they usually formed on the literary merits of their foreign brethren, and those who were of the same nation with themselves. No one of equal eminence suffered more from those unhappy animosities than the famous Politian.

Those who are conversant with the modern Italian poets who wrote in Latin, will not, I believe, assign him a rank inferiour to any of them; for though the language of Vida may approach nearer to that of the Augustan age, (which is very much to be doubted) he certainly loses in originality of sentiment more than he gains in purity or elegance of style. Yet Politian, illustrious as he was for genius and learning, was treated even with the utmost contempt by many of his contemporaries. He suffered still more after his death. For he was severely decried by the two Scaligers and Melancthon; and many others were not wanting who denied him any kind of excellence. On the contrary, the Italians regarded him among the first of those, who by their learning, and industry, and abilities, contributed most to the revival and advancement of letters. The impartiality of posterity too has confirmed the decision, which the Italians pronounced on the merits of their countryman.

I WISH I WERE THAT MAN.

SEED, who figured as an admirable preacher in England, about the middle of the last century, has combatted the general disposition of desiring to change one's lot, by an argument, extremely ingenious and acute. " Indeed," says he, " it is impossible, whatever we may fancy, we should " wish ourselves to be any other persons than what we really " are. For it is too plain to admit of a dispute, that a man, " in the exchange, proposes some advantage to himself. " But what *part* of a man's self could be better, if his *whole* " self was changed?

NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

IT is said that Tyrtæus, the elegiack poet of Athens, composed verses with such effect, as to inspire the soldiers

of the commonwealth with the most enthusiastick ardour; and in fact the victory at the second Messenian war is entirely attributed to the elegies he recited in presence of the army. In imitation of his great Athenian predecessor, some New-Hampshire Tyrtæus, at the approach of the late election of members of congress for that state, has thought proper to address his countrymen, and urge them to victory by the vigour of his verse. We shall take the liberty of presenting a few lines of this piece to our reader, not by any means as a specimen of New-Hampshire literature, but as a production of the political muse.

" Republicans! ye men of genuine worth,
" The day approaches when ye must stand forth
" In all your majesty—in all your might,
" To exercise your just inherent right.
" March fearless on—let nothing intervene
" To keep you from the all-important scene.
" When there, be firm—let no insidious brood
" Reduce you from the path of rectitude;
" But let us vote, united one and all,
" For BARTLETT, HARPER, MORRILL, DINSMOOR, HALL.
" These are the men proposed to your choice—
" These are the men approv'd of Wisdom's voice.
" Mild, temp'rate, firm—of parts acknowledged great—
" Not British tools, nor harpies of the State:
" They're not array'd 'gainst Freedom's glorious cause,
" But friends of peace and of their country's laws:
" With every virtue that adorns the heart,
" Not Jacksonites, nor dupes of Buonaparte!!"

LAUGHABLE DEFINITION.

IN Johnson's Dictionary abridged by Jos. Hamilton, there is this very perspicuous definition:

WISDOM, *s.* knowledge and judgment, conducted by *wisdom* and discretion.

HOMER.

IN reading Homer, the most obvious characteristick, which presents itself to my mind, is the irresistible charm with which he captivates the soul, and subdues the whole man to his matchless and undescribable powers. I hardly know what to say of it; it is like the substratum of the metaphysicians, which is impossible to be defined, and difficult to be conceived. His lines are like the links of a long chain, which is continually winding and winding about your heart, and before you can possibly evolve a single link, or extricate yourself from its embrace, the next in close succession follows, and rivets its fellow and itself with an invincible and magick strength. Should you even take up the book with indifference, your interest does not long lie dormant; your attention very soon becomes fastened; and when forced to close the book, you relinquish it with an involuntary sigh, and go to other studies and other pursuits with a mind which still longs to linger on the plains of Troy; with a mind tinged with a thousand various passions, confused, distracted by the din of arms; and reluctant to leave the company of gods and heroes, to visit the more confined circles of reality. As the man, who, when cured of a delirium by the assistance of his friends, looked on the recovery of his reason as a misfortune, and wished to regain that happy and unrestrained condition of mind which he before enjoyed; so does he, who has just laid aside his Homer, regret his emancipation from that thraldom, which is so forcible, that, as Pope says, " no man of a true poetical spirit is master of " himself while he reads him ;" and so delightful, that not a wish for liberation is excited in the mind.